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Wayside Gatherings.

In Praise of The Wayside Pulpit.

The Rev. H. H. Johnson, Minister of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, receives a word of praise in a recent issue of "The Christian World." Mr. Johnson was the originator of the wayside pulpit idea in England and his sayings, many of which are original, are always pithy and apt. I have often stood a little way off and counted the number of people who have stopped to read the motto for the week. One day I stood for twenty minutes and counted as many as thirty-five. Many churches have wayside pulpits nowadays, and many of them are very badly done, but Mr. Johnson's 'pulpit' is distinguished for its individuality.

* * *

A Socialist's Duty.

"The duty of a Socialist is to make more Socialists, and not to make a fool of himself by adding one more to the poverty-list."

—Mr. J. R. Clynes, M.P.

* * *

The Folly of War.

Speaking under the auspices of the League of Nation's Union, Dr. Norwood has been dealing with the very difficult problem: **How to get rid of War.** "War," he declared, "has now become dehumanised—there is no way of protecting civilization against poison-gas. The burdens of modern war strike nobody so hard as women and children. The thing that strikes me most is that the Church is not more indignant than it is at the war system, and all that it denotes and involves."

* * *

The Mentality of Modern Youth.

An interesting experiment has recently been carried out by an American journalist who asked five hundred men and women—chiefly college graduates and teachers—to graduate the Ten Commandments in the order of their moral significance. It is gratifying to note that the vast majority placed the Sixth Commandment (Thou shalt not kill) first. The position assigned to the Fourth Commandment (Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep it Holy ....) is not so encouraging—This was placed **last.**

* * *

More Answers from Bairns.

A Sunday School teacher had been relating the parable of the Ten Virgins and she asked what was the chief lesson taught by the parable. One bright girl volunteered the information: "that we should always be on the look-out for a husband." An Irish elementary school teacher informed me a few days ago that in reply to her question, "How did God prevent Adam and Eve from entering the Garden of Eden," she received the answer, "by putting a bush in a slap." Another schoolboy has given the information that Sir Walter Scott wrote, "Quentin Durwdar," "Ivanhoe," and "Emulsion."

* * *

At Last !

Canon Storr, of Westminster, in an interview with a representative of the Churchman (New York) says, "We are not afraid of the new knowledge nor are we alarmed by the new intellectual movement: our aim is to baptise the new knowledge in the name of Christ. . . . . Evangelism means for us that the Gospel of Jesus Christ as he Himself lived it and taught it is Supreme. We will not make central for faith and practice anything which he put on the circumference. Everything which he puts first we will put first."

—A. W.

Notes of the Month.

English Church Crisis.

The Church of England is face to face with the greatest crisis in its history. After prolonged consideration the time has come for definite decisions on the new Prayer Book which, of course, governs with force of law behind it, the form of service permissible in the State Church. Will the bishops, who met on January 12th, produce an alternative Prayer Book agreeable to the majority of Church of England members ? The Church faces this year the whole series of problems that have accumulated as the result of Prayer Book Revision. We understand that Convocation and the Church Assembly must accept or reject what the bishops will submit. The clergy in Convocation may submit alterations which the bishops may or may not approve —but the Assembly can only accept or reject. Evangelicals on the one hand, and Anglo-Catholics on the other, are in serious conflict over the revisions so far adopted, and on both sides responsible leaders are speaking of a breakaway if proposals distasteful to them are finally sanctioned. With jealous care the bishops have sought to safe-guard the secrets of their conclaves in Lambeth Palace, but it has transpired that an important compromise on the subject of Reservation of the Sacraments will be sanctioned by the New Prayer Book in a modified form and without services of Adoration. In other directions surprise may be expected and both Anglo-Catholics and Protestant Evangelicals are preparing themselves for changes of considerable significance. Between January 12th and January 22nd it was the task of the bishops to discover, if possible, a middle way and save a definite split. So far a compromise meeting all the disputed points has not been found ; but men of goodwill like the Archbishop of Canterbury, are lending all their energies to placate the two parties. We, on our part, cannot withhold our admiration for the fidelity to conviction which animates both Protestant Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics. The time will surely come when conscientious convictions will be respected in all sections of the Christian Church. To us, as Non-Subscribers, the ideal solution of the crisis in the Church seems to be that a large measure of comprehension would include all sections who accept the spirit of Christ as the way of life. Thus only can the crisis be permanently avoided and disturbing controversies be things of the past.

Coming Problems.

" The Hibbert Journal " for the current quarter contains one notable article worthy of attention. The premier place is fittingly occupied by an article from the pen of Professor Gilbert Murray on " The Next Set of Problems, but One," where he discusses the difficulties which are likely to beset modern nations. He and teachers and Students in a University are specially concerned with the advance—and no less with the understanding—of science, art, literature and the things of the spirit and with the solution of social questions and the direct improvement of social conditions. Because such activities and aspirations are wrecked by war he makes certain observations about war as an institution. He finds from history that " war is not a primeval institution, like marriage or property." In writing of war as an institution he does " not mean homicide, the bickering of savages over their fishing or cattle." His enquiry into the subject of the genesis of war has led him to the conclusion that " civilized war is not an act of impulse in the fighters themselves, which ceases when the impulse ceases. It is an act of deliberate policy." He recalls how in the last war modern states, with their scientific resources, did their business too well, how each inflicted on the other enormous harm, each suffering so much " that no countervailing gain in prestige or indemnities or territories could possibly outweigh their loss." In this connection he quotes an illuminating passage from a speech of M. Poincaré : " France refused to understand how a nation which has just won the greatest war in history can be in economic distress." To which the Professor neatly retorts " that refusing to understand facts does not abolish them." Thus he arrives at the conviction that " civilization creates war and has now reached a point where it must discard war." The consciousness of this is fully understood by the civilized nations who have formed themselves into a League of Nations which attempts to make it quite certain that no war of ambition shall be successful, and to give every member-nation the assurance that, if attacked, it will be protected by the full strength of the League. As one conversant with the proceedings of the League of Nations he finds sufficient evidence that

the nations want to disarm and all are pledged to do so : " and yet they dare not disarm, because they have no real security against attack." To attain the security so sorely needed " they must first agree never to go to war with each other—never at all, and secondly, the whole League must be ready, and must convince the world that it is ready, to protect the law-abiding state against any aggressor." This is the only way by means of which disarmament can be reached, namely, by means " of security and arbitration ; and disarmament means a peaceful world."

Professor Murray discusses at considerable length what he regards as two seeds of war, and tells in the first place that Great Britain and France between them now possess a third of the globe, and believes that " to shut any great European nations out from access to the necessities of civilized commerce (rubber, oil, quinine, and certain chemicals) must in the long run lead to war. The second seed of war he looks forward to with apprehension, " lies in the continuance of unregulated international competition." Another form of monopoly contemplated by him is territorial aggrandisement, and our author points out that " the world is filling up and sooner or later will have to be rationed." He asks the pertinent question, " what kind of civilization is it that we are spreading in the world ? " and finds that as it spreads " it deteriorates as it goes ; it carries the cinema and the jazz flying round the world, while Shakespeare and Milton stay at home." The case of Russia is a fruitful cause for alarm : for former revolutions in that country tended to identify it with western civilization, but the Bolshevik revolution has laid western civilization open to an attack by a militant anti-western religion, backed by a power that was once great and probably will soon be again." Confronted with the question, " do we value this civilization that we posess ? " he answers convincingly, " it is our heritage," and commends it, in these words : " With all it's faults, ours is a progressive civilization. It moves, grows, changes, while it remains the same. It believes in order, wealth, in material progress just as it believes in the value of knowledge, of artistic and intellectual achievement, in freedom of thought and the enoblement of the spirit. It has produced, both in the material and spiritual worlds, results that stagger imagination." But he is not blind to the faults of this western world which are " hideous." He does not forget that the taint runs through it of blood and alcohol. It is stamped by the institution of war, by the degradation of the poor, by drink, gambling and vice : above all, ever since the industrial revolution, by a strange lack of beauty, a lack of self-respect and human dignity." In answer to the question, has it any meaning. No one can exactly tell. It depends on the viewpoint. The questions requiring an answer are two : " Is the history of man " merely " a brief and disreditable episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets ? or is it something more ? " Our author answers with no uncertain sound : " This is the true message of our Hellenic and European tradition. Serve humanity ; glorify God ; go forth, not so much to convert, but to contribute. Live in the service of something higher and more enduring, so that when the tragic transcience of life breaks in upon you, you can feel that the thing for which you have lived does not die." We have directed our readers' attention to this masterly appreciation of the problems of the future confronting civilization not because we regard it as an adequate summary of a closely reasoned and finely conceived article, but, if possible, to whet the appetite of the intelligent reader that he may go to the fountain head and so realise for himself the immense difficulties to be overcome that still lie in wait for the civilization of which we are the product.

The Doctrine of the Trinity.

Text—Mark 12 : 29.—" The Lord our God is one Lord."

The custom of representing God under the form of a Trinity, and of maintaining that in the Unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, is almost as old as civilisation itself. Man, in his age-long search for God, had arrived at the conception of a Divine Trinity thousands of years before Christianity was thought of.

The earliest Divine Trinity of which we have any records, comes from the ancient Egyptian civilisation.

Over 3,000 years B.C. the Egyptians worshipped God by addressing prayers to Osiris, Isis and Horus who constituted a Divine Trinity. We next meet with the Trinity in the Babylonian religion. It is composed of Anu,

(the God of heaven), Enlil, (the God of earth), and Ea, (the God of water). They are not three separate Gods but partial manifestations of a single Deity. This is about 3,000 B.C.

We turn to India for the next important Trinity. As early as 1,300 B.C., about the same time as the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, the Deity was worshipped under the form of a Trinity, composed of Agni, presiding over the earth, Indra, over the air, and Surya, over the heaven. In the Vedas these three are asserted over and over again to be forms of the One True God.

The next Great Trinity in the history of man is met with in the Christian Religion. This represents, not man's first attempt, but his last attempt to think of the Godhead under the form of a Trinity. It is safe to say that never again will man attempt to do the impossible, that is, think of a Unity in terms of a Trinity. If modern science and modern philosophy are proving anything, they are proving that this great universe is a unity, and that working through it, showing itself in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, is one Great Spirit which, in spite of its multifarious manifestations, must be a Unity.

The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be reconciled with reason, neither can it be reconciled with the Unity of God so plainly taught in the Bible and confirmed by Jesus when he said, "the Lord our God is one Lord." The doctrine is opposed to the simplest rules of arithmetic. How can God be One, a Unity and at the same time be Three, a Trinity?

Try in the affairs of everyday life to convince a man that one is the same as three and that three is the same as one and you will soon have him looking very suspiciously at you.

It is a very poor defence of the Trinity to say that the Three Persons are just three manifestations of the same God, because the obvious reply is, why limit God to three manifestations? It is just as reasonable to fix the number of manifestations at a million and three, indeed much more reasonable when one considers the countless ways in which the Great Spirit behind the universe reveals itself.

It is a still poorer defence of the Trinity to say that the doctrine as we know it is taught in the Bible. In no place in the Bible is the word trinity to be found. A man who had never heard of the Christian Trinity would never learn anything about it from the Bible. Only in one passage is it stated conclusively that the Godhead consists of Three (I John 5 : 7) and this text is admitted, even by learned Trinitarians, to be a forgéry. In no Bible written before the ninth century are these words to be found and the translators of the Revised Version omitted them.

This "proof" of the Trinity was forged and inserted in the Bible some time after the ninth century, thus showing clearly that no satisfactory proof of the Trinity could be found in the genuine Scriptures. It is only fair to say that no learned theologian today claims that the doctrine of the Trinity as we know it, is to be found in the Bible.

The Hebrew Prophets from the eighth century onwards teach that God is one. Jesus and Paul confirm the monotheistic teaching of the Prophets, and nowhere do they suggest that there is any division of persons in the Godhead.

In the Christian literature of the first century, the word trinity, or its equivalent, is not to be found. As late as the year 300 no trinitarian forms of prayer are known to the Church. Up till this time the Church had regarded Jesus the Son as subordinate to God the Father and though in the year 325 the Council of Nicea decided that Jesus was God and declared its belief in the Holy Spirit, it left undefined the exact relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son.

The matter remained unsettled till the year 381 when the Council of Constantinople re-affirmed the Nicene Creed and added to it a declaration of the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. From this time onwards the Roman Emperors proclaimed that they would punish all Christians who did not believe in and worship, three persons in one God.

Strictly speaking, we should not speak of the Christian Trinity. We should speak of it as a pagan idea which has managed to get itself clothed in Christian terminology. Historically it has nothing to do with Christianity which grew for 300 years without ever conceiving of God under the form of a Trinity. The idea of the Trinity comes into the Church from the outside and is directly traceable to Platonic and other philosophical speculations which began to influence the Church during the 3rd and 4th centuries.

In view of its history is it necessary to say that we cannot accept the doctrine of

the Trinity? Need we apologise for accepting the doctrine of the Unity of God as taught by the Bible and early Christianity, and rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity as taught by the Councils of the 4th century?

Apart from purely theological considerations, we reject the doctrine of the Trinity because it is opposed to the findings of modern Science and Philosophy which have proved, if they have proved anything at all, that there is One Great Spirit working through this great universe and that this Spirit shows itself, not in three manifestations but in millions of ways. We believe that God is a Spirit—One Spirit—in which we live and move and have our being.

—S. P. W.

Visit of Dean Inge to Belfast.

According to the "Northern Whig," the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D., preached to crowded congregations in the Belfast Cathedral on Sunday, January 16th, morning and afternoon. Taking his text from Joel ii. 25.—"I will restore unto you the years which the locust hath eaten," he spoke on "Forgiveness," and said:—

Their attitude to the past and the question of forgiveness were closely connected. An eminent scientist had the other day stated that the modern man was not worrying about his sins at all. How could the modern man—assuming that that scientist interpreted him rightly—justify his attitude? What could he say for himself? Perhaps he would begin by saying—and truly enough—that his business in this world was to find out what he was good for, and not what he was bad for, and it was waste of time to fight his lost battles over again. He would probably add that in any case the past was over and done with, that it was irrevocable and, for better or for worse dead; indeed, very dead.

"The modern man would be, as usual, half right," proceeded the Dean. "As the old proverb says: 'It's no use crying over spilt milk.' But he would be also half wrong, because repentance is not simply regret. St. Paul has distinguished very clearly between the right and the wrong kind of sorrow for sin, so that there is no excuse for doubting. Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, but the sorrow of the world worketh unto death. Godly sorrow looks mainly forward, but worldly sorrow looks back."

The Dean went on to say that therein lay one of the differences between the Jewish religious teaching and Christianity at the present day. When the Jew had once left his sins and turned to God, he had no fear that God would still be angry with him. Our Lord never dwelt on sins except in connection with forgiveness and repentance.

What was meant by the forgiveness of sins? They were said to be blotted out of the book. No doubt that was correct, but it was an undignified metaphor. There was no need for them to picture their Maker keeping a score against them. Forgiveness meant something more than the cancellation of a debt. How did it affect their relations with their past? That was the question which they had to ask. Repentance was not merely external and arbitrary. God will not say depart in peace without giving what their thirsty souls craved for. Forgiveness was real. It was not legal fiction.

But the past was something not yet completed. It had not taken its final shape, and its shape would be what they would make it. It was God's work to join up the ragged edges of the bygone, for it belonged to a greater scheme than their little lives; yet it was their privileges as Christians to be allowed to be co-workers with God in this work.

Forgiveness helped them to turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones. Even their wretched past could be ennobled, and its rags and tatters joined together. They were not promised that no personal remorse would remain. That was too much to expect.

Seeing through a Glass Darkly.

In the afternoon the Dean preached from the 11th verse of the 18th Psalm, and the 5th verse of the 1st chapter of the 1st epistle of St. John, dealing in the main with "God and Light."

He said that as St. Paul had told them that the three things which formed the foundation of the Christian character were faith, hope and love, and just as modern philosophy told them that the three great eternal values and attributes of God were truth, beauty, and goodness, so St. John gave another triplet—"God is a spirit, He is light, and He is love." This seemed to be a world for heroes, for the hard man made for action, not for the weaklings who crave for sympathy and tenderness. And yet all who had loved and had been loved knew that St. Paul and St. John were right.

The words " God is Light " seemed to be at best only half true. God had not revealed Himself clearly at all times and in all places, and not least in the Bible itself. There were indications that He hid Himself that the clouds of darkness were around Him, that they saw but the fringes of His ways and heard but the whisper of His voice.

The clear vision was hardly for this life. Here in this world they saw through a glass darkly, and they knew only in part. Nor did they find it easy to associate the Church with that enlightenment which they expected from those who were most familiar with divine things. Enlightenment had come to them through science, poetry, and philosophy, rather than from theology. Ever since the Reformation their knowledge of the universe, of the history of their own race, and of the world had been growing, and new vistas of incomparable splendour had been opened to the imagination. Man had been humbled and exalted as never before. The new knowledge had brought new moral duties and obligations, but those who claimed to be God's ambassadors had not helped them much in those new problems. That fact showed want of courage which the Psalmist advised them to have—the courage from the truth that the Lord was their light and their salvation.

The Pessimist.

" Obedience to Christ," went on the Dean " will turn us into optimists. A lot of nonsense is talked about that to-day. It has been said that the optimist was like the barometer, always stuck at ' set fair,' and the pessimist like a barometer, always stuck at ' stormy.' No sensible man will give sixpence for either of them. Christianity certainly teaches fundamental optimism—all things worked together for good to those who loved God—but the breezy confidence of Robert Browning, ' God's in His heaven, all is right with the world,' is a startling contradiction of the words of the Apostle who said almost harshly that the whole world lay in the hands of the wicked one. It is plain that to walk in the Light does not mean to the Apostle that no black place will be seen anywhere. Wherever the Christian faith has been strongly believed in, and vividly felt, the distinctions between right and wrong have stood out in bold relief."

" I do not say," continued the Dean, " that the Christian conscience has always been very enlightened. On the contrary, religious people have been prone to put a black mark on a perfectly harmless action, and consecrate some tradition of their elders, in spite of the warnings of Our Lord. Wherever Christianity has been believed, the world has been seen on a battle ground between good and evil spiritual forces."

" Our Glorious Heritage of Freedom."

" When in doubt as to a sermon subject, preach about our glorious heritage of freedom " would seem to be a maxim among preachers of our Non-Subscribing Churches. The laity, too, are prone to take this view, and there is something wearisome about the constant repetition of platitudes on the subject of freedom from our pulpits.

Liberty, of course, is a great thing, and the freedom enjoyed by ministers and people alike within our churches is one of its greatest assets. The development of the idea of freedom is one of the biggest contributions the Church has made to Christian thought and practice in this country. We do well to be proud of the fight made for our freedom, and to cherish the liberty won for us. But why do we make so little use of the freedom of which we are everlastingly prating ?

Year after year our churches go on very much in the same old way. Now and again a minister or layman may have a spasmodic break with tradition and custom, but innovation and experiment are no more characteristic of our church than of others.

It happens that almost all the churches in Christendom have over-emphasised some features of Christian faith and practice and have undervalued others. They have imagined they possessed all the truth and that their brethren of other communions have been in total error, or, at any rate, that the aspect of truth which they possessed was the only one suited to their peculiar conditions. Some churches, like the Roman, have quite explicitly declared this. We have not declared it, but have acted upon the belief. No communion, however, possesses all the truth, but all possess some element of truth, and there is also a body of truth outside the borders of the Church. If our Church, therefore, is as concerned about truth as it professes to be, and is as free to pursue truth as it proclaims it is, one might urge it as an essential duty of the Church to explore the teaching and methods of the whole Church with a view to the appropriation of what is found to be of

value. It might also be urged that the church should fearlessly examine its own position with a view to modification, if such be found necessary. This should, of course, be done democratically, and there should be no attempt on the part of individuals or of groups to impose their wills on the whole Church. What is required within the congregation is conference, and the adoption of changes by common consent.

It is along these lines that the unity of the Church, so much desired by all sections, will best be reached. A unity based on compromise is obviously undesirable, but unity based on understanding and real agreement seems both practicable and satisfactory. The need for effort of this kind is great and one example will suffice. The theory behind revivalistic movements does not commend itself to the modern and liberal elements in the Church, and the methods adopted by the evangelists are regarded as equally objectionable, but the objectors are doing nothing to work out a new evangelical theory, or a new missionary method. They are simply funking the church's duty. Our freedom has been, and is, too negative. It is regarded as liberty to deny rather than to do. It has not been used to lead in the shaping of new beliefs or evolving new practices. It is from free people that advances in these directions may be, and should be made. —O. S.

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Further donations are respectfully solicited and should be sent to Rev. G. J. Slipper, Newry.

BAPTISM.

On Sunday, 2nd January, by the Rev. Joseph Bibby, at Killough—Nora Roberta, infant daughter of Robert and Annie E. M'Cullen.

DEATH.

BULMER.—January 3rd, at Clareview House, Ballyclare, Elizabeth Bulmer in her 80th year.

"Bible Standards, Which?"

By Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., Minister of 1st Presbyterian Church, Belfast. Preached on Sunday evening, January 16, 1927.

TEXT: "*For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that someone teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. . . . .But solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Wherefore let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection.*" HEBREWS V. 12, 14; VI. 1a.

This reproach was doubtless fully deserved. Those who should have led the way to fuller truth and life idly tarried where they first began the Christian course. The latter pointed onwards and upwards, presenting an inspiring vista to fullgrown men. Yet for them its appeal was lost, since their backs were turned upon the opening prospects of wider revelation.

Is not such a reproach as fully deserved by the self-constituted teachers of to-day who see only the glamour of the past and show no concern for the unfolding glories of the present? To give honour to traditional truths and modes of interpretation, as if they closed man's approach to perfection, is to rest content with the rudiments and be blind to God's continued revelations. When men of spiritual vision believed that "there was more light and truth to bring forth from God's Holy Word" how can it be claimed that the subordinate standards must be retained unaltered and unabridged? Yet such is the claim advanced by loyal champions of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

Obviously, such a position is out of accord with the facts of theology and all the tendencies of recent development. Not long ago an orthodox Presbyterian divine informed us that it would be difficult to find a fellow-minister preaching extreme Calvinistic doctrines or a Presbyterian congregation that would think them acceptable. And yet in that very Westminster Confession of Faith it is proposed to maintain "unaltered and unabridged" we meet with this categorical statement: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory,

some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others preordained to everlasting death!" If such doctrines are, as we are informed, out of harmony with Presbyterian thought and teaching to-day, what religious object can be attained by their retention in a Standard of Faith?

The answer to that question is forthcoming elsewhere. There has long been proceeding the determined effort of earnest and honest believers to make the principles of faith fit the facts. The General Assembly, when it entrusted such a task to a Special Committee, was merely bringing Irish Presbyterianism into line with similar bodies elsewhere. To thwart its wise intent is to make a mockery of faith and to ban all fruitful progress. As compared with other Christian bodies she would be in a backwater, aloof from the flowing stream of progress. More than seventy years ago members of the Anglican Church keenly felt that the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Prayer Book originating in the sixteenth century contained theological propositions no thoughtful man could accept. Consequently they pointed out the dilemma created for Christian truth-lovers, and their earnest petition resulted in relief. In 1865 the so-called "Subscription Relief Act" was passed, prescribing a merely general Declaration, which is that now made. The change is significant, as shown by the substitution of the word "doctrine" for the earlier word "doctrines." The latter made it appear that the candidate for ordination accepted some hundreds of dogmatic propositions precisely in the sense in which they were understood in the sixteenth century. The formula as altered and now used merely implies a general sympathy with the Anglican position. Thus, one Anglican rector states his own attitude when making the prescribed Declaration of Assent: 'When, therefore, I make this Declaration, you will understand me to mean that I believe the system and doctrine of the Church of England . . . to be as a whole those best adapted to bring home to myself and to others that knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus Christ which is necessary for our salvation." Such a statement is possible for full-grown men with "their senses exercised to discern good and evil," and permits of their pressing on to perfection. In fact the speaker would only be a member of a Church progressive in its liberty and with "power to re-state the old beliefs in such a way as to bring them into harmony with the knowledge of the day."

Thus, the position of Traditionalism ceases to count, except historically and as the earnest attempt of earlier thinkers to envisage and embody truth as they perceived it. Their attempt we do not disparage even while we claim the same liberty of full-grown men in Christ. But it is imperative that Bible Standards should ring true and represent a saving and growing faith. We are really false to faith and recreant as regards later revelations if we do not look at this world of ours with the same awe and wonder, but with a more precise knowledge than our fathers had. Our standard of truth may not be more exacting than theirs, but it is more complex and more comprehending. The truth of science does not conflict with the truth of inspiration. Truth is really one, no less in the realm of nature than is that of revelation. It is the attitude towards truth which is vital; to feel the thrill of its challenge, to be moved by the power of its appeal, to respond to the urgency of its quest—that is the all-important matter. Now, as always, men find in the search for fuller truth their reasonable service, and in the finding of it their sufficing reward. It is not for us to belittle the results of our fathers but to carry on the torch of the progress they began and made possible; ever bearing in mind that we serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of letters.

What is Presbyterianism?

Presbyterianism is older than the Longer and Shorter Catechisms and the Confession of Faith. Presbyterians who subscribe to these standards of faith, by right should be called Subscribing Presbyterians, and the Non-Subscribers simply— Presbyterians, and if the latter had been in the majority instead of in the minority such would have been the case. As was so ably explained in the last Synod lecture, it is more correct to speak of Presbyterianism as a form of government as representative rather than democratic. Democracy belonged originally to state-cities, each of which was self-governed and used a method of referendum. That is not so in Presbyterianism in which rule is concentrated in church-courts which are representative.

Strictly speaking, Presbyterianism is Theocratic. John Knox made that clear in the beginning, when he declared, "There was no king in Scotland, but Christ." He

made large claims for the power of the ministry, perhaps quite as great as those made for the Roman clergy; the magistracy was subordinate to the ministry of the Church. John Knox had been a priest, and probably others who were the first Presbyterian ministers in Scotland had also been priests. As much as he possibly could John Knox repudiated the "puddle of Popery," as he described the experience of his priesthood. A stern man for stern times, who could say to Queen Mary, "Better that women should weep than strong men," his monument is in its rightful place in the same row with that of Calvin in Geneva.

Apostolic succession was discarded by him, and at the beginning there was no ordination of ministers, only election. If any thought was given concerning the matter, it may have been that the ordination they had received as priests, sufficed. In any case, Presbyterian ordination was not begun in Scotland until well on in the reign of James I., so that if it be only tactical ordination, "the mere continuity of preaching," the continuity is broken, and whatever Apostolic Succession may mean, it is impossible to claim it as unbroken in Presbyterianism. Until the Reformation, no challenge was made as to the succession through the Episcopate, and it is because of that our Episcopalian friends take up such a strong and unyielding attitude with reference to the Episcopacy. They have also in every Diocese, a Presbytery—that is the term used for the clery of a diocese. In Ireland, the affairs of a Diocese are controlled by the Diocesan Synod, which is presided over by the Bishop. In this respect the two churches have much in common in the guidance of affairs. The Low Church party would maintain that the only real difference, so far as church government was concerned was in the fact that the Bishop was a permanent official and the Moderator of the Presbytery was elected annually. The Broad, High and Anglican-Catholic parties claim more meaning in the functions of the Bishop than that. In the order of precedence, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland comes next to the Lord Chancellor, even before the Archbishop of Canterbury. As an instance of what is meant by Theocratic Government, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is opened and closed by the High Commissioner in the name of His Majesty, King George, and the Moderator opens and closes it in the name of Christ. Theocracy therefore, does not mean autocracy.—ULLIN.

Contributory Insurance Fund.

The following Subscriptions have been forwarded to me since the appearance of the lists in the December number of the Magazine; and did not appear therein as promises or payments.

CONTRIBUTORY INSURANCE FUND.

	£	s	d
Previously acknowledged	158	11	0
Mr. Justice Andrews and Mrs. Andrews, Comber	20	0	0
Comber Branch Women's League ..	20	0	0
Old Presbyterian Congregation, Larne ..	18	10	0
Mrs. Thomas Andrews, Comber ..	10	0	0
Miss Girvan, Larne	10	0	0
Patrick Crawford, Esq., Larne ..	5	0	0
Rev. J. J. Magill, B.A., Rademon ..	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. J. W. M'Kay, Calcutta ..	5	0	0
Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland	5	0	0
Dr. David A. Porter, Crossgar ..	4	14	6
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John Patterson, Esq., Rademon ..	0	5	0
Andrew Patterson, Jnr., Esq., Rademon	0	2	6
Total	£287	7	0

I beg to express my grateful thanks for the above. The Fund will remain open for the receiving of further subscriptions.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT J. ROSSINGTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

Exhibition of Portraits in the Belfast Art Gallery.

We understand that there is shortly to be opened in the Belfast Art Gallery an Exhibition of Portraits containing Ulster Celebrities, many of whom were Unitarians in prominent positions who rendered great service in their day and generation to Belfast and district generally. The Exhibition opens on Feb. 2nd. This notice is intended to draw the attention of our readers generally as many of them might be interested and might like to see the Exhibition.—EDITOR.

Laymen's League.

The Committee of the Laymen's League have pleasure in announcing that a Ten Days' Mission in Belfast and District has been arranged with Rev. C. W. Townsend of London, at end of November, commencing with a United Service in Ulster Hall.

Would Country Congregations please note and make arrangements to ensure the fullest success of this Mission. All information from Secretary, J. H. Gilliland, 35 Rosemary Street, Belfast.

Reports.

All Souls' Church.—Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse, preaching on Sunday evening, January 16, gave the third of his series of sermons on "What we do not believe and why we do not believe."

"The Fall and the Atonement" was the subject, and Mr. Whitehouse said that according to orthodox Christianity, all the evils to which flesh was heir came into the world as the result of Adam's sin as recorded in Genesis iii., and in consequence of Adam's crime all men were corrupt and sinful to such an extent that no matter what efforts they made to live good lives, they deserve "God's wrath and demnation" as the ninth article of the Church has it. However, the Christian religion, like all religions, had its own particular scheme of salvation. It was that though all human beings were miserable sinners, and richly deserve to be eternally damned, God has been induced to spare them. He accepted the sufferings of Jesus as a substitute for the suffering that He intended to inflict on the rest of humanity. In this way Jesus atoned for our sins.

"This, in brief, is what orthodoxy affirms, and this is what we of the liberal Christian faith emphatically deny. We hold that belief in the orthodox Fall and Atonement involve ideas of God which are utterly degrading, and we refuse to entertain these unworthy conceptions of God."

Orthodoxy solemnly affirmed that God had been induced to accept the sufferings of an innocent man as part-payment of our guilt. They were asked to believe that divine justice was on a lower moral plane than human justice, and that though we would not allow the innocent to suffer for the guilty yet God allowed it!

His church believed just as sincerely as the orthodox church that Jesus came to save men from sin, but they refused to believe that He came to save men from the consequences of sin.

Those who did not take the trouble to understand their position often accused them of denying everything and affirming nothing. They had their denials, but they also had their affirmations. "We deny the Fall and the Atonement because they involve such degrading conceptions of God. We affirm emphatically and definitely that a man will reap what he sows, and nothing that happened in Palestine 2,000 years ago will prevent him from reaping it."

Ballee.—During Christmas week the hearts of our Sunday School children were gladdened by the annual entertainment so thoughtfully and kindly provided in the local school room.

As on previous occasions, there was a full muster of the little guests at the appointed hour, and following light refreshments, very favourable weather conditions enabled outdoor exercise to be indulged in with unremitting energy in the adjoining Manse field. Tea was subsequently dispensed by the Misses Balmer, Cavan, Hughes, M'Meekin and Stitt, following which Christmas stockings, lucky bags, sweets, fruit, and chocolates were distributed. Indoor games followed until the approach of twilight reminded the young people that even a perfect day must come to its close, and with hearty cheers for their genial host and the young ladies of the congregation who had contributed to their enjoyment once again, a happy band of children wended their several ways homeward.

On the first Sunday in the New Year further kindness was shown by the distribution of valuable gift books to all the Sunday School Scholars.

Ballyclare.—On Monday December 20th, the Annual Sunday School Social and Xmas Party took place in the schoolroom which was gaily decorated for the occasion. Shortly after the arrival of the children at five o'clock tea was dispensed by the ladies in charge—the Misses J. Laird & M. Kerr with J. Harson and E. Laird assisting. From the contents of Xmas crackers provided at the tea tables the children adorned themselves and joining in round after round of amusement evidently enjoyed themselves. A feature of the evening was a huge artificial Xmas cake containing a present for each scholar of the school. To the presents were attached tapes with tabs each bearing a name and which on being pulled by the person whose name appeared thereon brought from the hidden interior of the cake the present each was intended to have. The cake and contents were kindly provided by Miss J. Laird. Book prizes were then presented to the scholars who succeeded in putting in the requisite number of attendances during the year. Later in the evening a musical programme was given by the scholars and members of the choir. The programme which consisted of songs, fairy dances, recitations, violin solos, etc, was contributed by the following : The Misses E. & A. Kerr, A. Montgomery and Mrs. Moore, Messrs. W. & J. Harson, J. Kerr, Master Tommy and Master Harold Peoples. As a finish the choir sang the good King Winceslaus. Mrs. Moore acted as accompanist. A second cup of tea having been dispensed a most successful evening concluded with the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

Greyabbey. The Annual Sunday School Social was held on Christmas Evening when the children enjoyed many good things. Prizes were distributed for attendance during the year. The School is in a flourishing condition and most of the pupils attend church. Votes of thanks were passed to Miss Pearl Brown for her services as honorary organist in the Sunday School, to Miss Carson and Miss Murphy for extra gifts and to Mr. Samuel Patton for special prizes for good attendance.

Holywood.—A very happy evening was spent by the Sunday School Scholars and their parents and friends on Friday, Jan. 7th, when the Annual Soiree, Distribution of Prizes and Christmas Tree, took place in the Schoolroom. The children met for tea at 7 o'clock, and at 8 o'clock the room was crowded with bairns and grown-ups. Lady Campbell had kindly undertaken to present the prizes to the successful scholars, but to the disappointment of all she was prevented from attending, and Sir John Campbell, who had volunteered to fill her place was called away on professional duties., An excellent substitute was found, however, in Mrs. Robinson, the Superintendent of the afternoon School, and one of our best church workers. Thirty-two prizes were awarded, and four scholars, who had punctually attended every time the school was opened, were presented with special prizes, kindly given by Mrs. Omar Nelson. The names of these scholars deserve to be put on record ; they are, Sadie Patty, Sadie Lennox, John Lennox, and Georgina M'Gilton. After the prize-giving, a short entertainment was given, consisting of a sketch called " Cruel Jack Frost," performed by scholars under the the training and direction of Mrs. Robinson, and some excellent fun contributed by three lads (James Meneely, James Shannon, and Kenneth Robinson) under the inspiration and superintendence of Mr. W. J. Harvey. A feature of the programme was the recitations and dancing of Miss Eileen Millar, who kindly came from Belfast to help. Last of all, to the great delight of the little ones, a giant Christmas tree (the gift of Sir Robert Kennedy) was stripped of its attractive load, the gifts being distributed by Father Christmas (Mr. Donald Lockett), The Minister, who presided, made a statement in regard to the School and thanked all who had helped. A very successful " treat " was concluded by the singing of the National Anthem and hearty cheers.

Mountpottinger.—At the Evening Service on December 19th our Organist presented a Christmas Cantata entitled " The Morning Star," with the help of an augmented Choir and in the presence of a large congregation.

The soloists were Miss A. Beattie, Mrs. A. Ferguson, Mr. A. Melling, Mr. H. Steene, Mr. D. Greenaway, whilst the position of conductor and organist was filled by Mr. H. Shepherd himself. On January 16th another Musical Service was held in the evening when the Choir rendered Anthems and Mr. T. M'Kenzie's Orchestra was responsible for a selection of short pieces. The next Musical Service has been arranged for February 20th when Mr. Shepherd will conduct an Orchestra which, in addition to rendering selected items, will take the place of the Organ throughout the evening.

Obituary.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bulmer, Ballyclare.

Our little community has suffered loss in the death at Clareview House, Ballyclare of Mrs. Elizabeth Bulmer in her 80th year. Mrs. Bulmer was the widow of the late Daniel Bulmer to whose foresight and organisation our present Orphan Society largely owes its conception. Settling in Belfast from England about the year 1885, Mr. and Mrs. Bulmer worshipped with the 2nd Congregation in Rosemary Street, prior to its removal to Elmwood Avenue. On coming to Ballyclare 23 years ago Mrs. Bulmer's religious faith found a congenial home in the Old Presbyterian Church of which, till the last, she remained a consistent and devoted member. Her heart was in her church and Sunday seldom failed to find her in her accustomed place until failing health made the journey quite impossible. Of a kindly, gentle, warm-hearted, sympathetic disposition, Mrs. Bulmer was beloved by all who knew her. We realise our great loss but we cannot forget that such a gracious spirit was given us for so many years was indeed great gain. To Mrs. Logan, an only and devoted daughter we tender sincerest sympathy.

The funeral which was private, took place to the Belfast City Cemetery on Wednesday January 5th. The services in the house and at the graveside were conducted by the Revs. P. Godding and A. M. Bell. On the following Sunday tribute was paid to deceased's memory by the minister. At the close of the service the Dead March was played, the congregation reverently standing.

Mrs. Curry.

Mrs. Curry, of Ballyhalbert, a life-long and faithful member of Ballyhemlin, passed away on January 6th, and was interred on the 8th inst., in St. Andrew's graveyard. She belonged to a sea-faring family, and her son, Mr. Samuel Curry, late of the Royal Navy and Ballywalter light-ship, is the sexton of Ballyhemlin.

Some years ago, Mrs. Curry became blind, but maintained great cheerfulness and fortitude in the face of increasing infirmity. Bronchitis got its grip upon her, and for several winters past became more and more severe, causing great physical strain, and giving rise to complications, from which release was welcome. She exercised an influence for good, and had the esteem of all in the locality who knew her.

James Stephenson Hunter.

The congregation of Crumlin recently sustained a severe loss through the death of two of its devoted members. The passing away of Mr. James Stephenson Hunter at the advanced age of 89 on Monday, 10th January was not unexpected. He had been in failing health for the past two years, but to the end he was mentally remarkably alert and lucid. He was one of the most extensive and progressive farmers in the country, and evidence of his skill and energy are everywhere to be seen at Lake View, British, where he resided. During his life time he had served the community in many ways and about fifteen years ago he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for County Antrim. As long as he was able he attended regularly the Petty Sessions at Crumlin. His straightforwardness and integrity won for him a high place in the estimation of his acquaintances far and near. Up to a few years ago he was a regular worshipper at our Church in Antrim and a Secretary of the Congregation. Latterly he attended our Church in Crumlin. Through his death our Church generally has lost one who was intensely interested in its welfare. The funeral, a very large one, took place on Wednesday to Antrim New Cemetery.

Mrs. Riddel, Belfast.

On January 1st, there passed away at her residence, Grosvenor, Glastonbury Avenue, Belfast, Mrs. Riddel, the widow of the late Mr. Edward Riddel, of Beechmount, who pre-deceased his wife by many years. More recently, the death of Miss Ellen M'Tear, her sister, had further overshadowed her life, but she bore with wonderful courage and cheerfulness not only these trials but also the weakness of advanced age. For many months she had been confined to the house, but was always ready with kindly welcome to receive visits from her friends. Earlier, she was a most active supporter of many good causes, including the Belfast Hospitals, the Industrial School, and the Domestic Mission. Her church connection during her residence in Belfast, was as a member of the First Presbyterian Congregation in Rosemary Street. Regular in her attendance when health and strength permitted, she maintained her keen interest in her church's welfare up to the end. The service in the house was conducted by the minister of the First Church (the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.). At the graveside in the Old Churchyard, Carnmoney, Canon Clarke acted in

co-operation with Mr. Rossington. As the funeral was private only intimate relatives and friends were in attendance on January 3rd, when she was laid to rest alongside her nearest of kin. Unfortunately, as a result of her regrettable death, the distinguished Riddel name lost its last living representative.

Mrs. Weatherall.

The news of the death of Mrs. Weatherall, wife of the Rev. W. Weatherall, for many years minister of the Moira Congregation, caused feelings of great regret among the many friends in the North of Ireland. Since the retirement of Mr. Weatherall from the active ministry, they lived for a short period in Newry, and then removed to one of the suburbs of London. Mr. Weatherall has been ill for some months, and Mrs. Weatherall also had a serious illness from the effects of which she never quite recovered, but her death was not anticipated. In December, an attack of bronchitis and heart trouble followed, and she passed away peacefully on Tuesday, 21st December, despite the careful nursing of her devoted daughter, Miss Margaret Weatherall. The funeral took place on Tuesday, 29th December, to Golder's Green Crematorium. Rev. Bertram Lister, M.A., conducting same. The sincere sympathy of all is extended to Mr. Weatherall, who is now in feeble health and confined to bed, in the loss of his wife after 63 years together, and to Miss Weatherall, and her sister, Mrs. Agnew of Moira, also to her sons, the Rev. J. H. Weatherall, M.A., London, and W. A. Weatherall, Cork, and her grandson, Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., minister of our York Street Congregation.

John Harkness.

John Harkness of Corbally, near Antrim, where he resided with his brother and sister passed away at midnight of Tuesday, 11th January, at the age of 58. He had been in failing health for some time, but few thought that the end was so near. Of a quiet, retiring disposition, he was a very fine type of man in every way and held in high esteem by all who knew him. His death at a comparatively early age will be greatly felt in his home where they were so devoted to each other, and a severe loss in our Church life. The funeral which was private, was to Muckamore on Thursday. To these sorrowing families and relatives we tender our sincere sympathy. The services in these bereaved homes and at the grave-sides were conducted by Rev. S. E. Bowen.

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